



WMU's Ethics Bowl team advanced undefeated to the quarterfinals at the 2009 Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl National Championship.

WMU lost its quarterfinal match to Eckerd College (Petersburg, Fla.) by only 5 points after beating Williams College (Williamstown, Mass.), Weber State University (Ogden, Utah) and DePauw University (Greencastle, Ind.) in preliminary matches.

Indiana University (Bloomington) ultimately finished first among the 32 teams competing in Cincinnati at the March 5 event, sponsored by the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics.

WMU students participating were: junior Nicola Fitzsimmons of Kalamazoo (philosophy, political science and psychology), senior Shawn Myers of Jackson (biomedical sciences and psychology), junior Joshua Thomas of Holland (psychology and philosophy), and senior Chelsea Thompson of Portage (communication).

WMU qualified for the national championship by finishing third at the Upper Midwest Regional Ethics Bowl held in November on the WMU campus. The regional winner, Northeast Illinois University, also made it to the quarterfinals.

The team's faculty sponsor is Sandra Borden, professor of communication and co-director of WMU's Center for the Study of Ethics in Society. The coaches are David Charlton of Kalamazoo, an M.A. student in philosophy; Joshua Upson of Galesburg, a part-time instructor in philosophy; and Nicholas Sars of Kalamazoo, an M.A. student in philosophy.

"The team was outstanding this year. They offered well-reasoned positions and were articulate and professional," Borden said.

The team is sponsored by the Ethics Center with financial support from the School of Communication and Lee Honors College. Thompson is a communication major, and Myers is a member of the Honors College.

Ethics Bowl provides students with an opportunity to practice applying the moral theories and argumentation principles that they learn in their ethics classes. They receive 15 case studies in advance involving ethical issues in a number of practical contexts, including engineering, law, medicine, personal relationships, school, and politics.

During a round, each team takes turns presenting its position on a case and critiquing the other team's position on a different case. Teams must answer questions about their positions from a panel of judges. Judges assign scores based on logical consistency, clarity, focus and thoroughness. The Ethics Center will be taking applications for the 2010 team later this semester. For information, contact Dr. Borden at 387-0362 or sandra.borden@wmich.edu.